

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1076

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to college in the high school.

Brief Description: Establishing the college in the high school program.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Rodne, Sells, Quall, Dickerson and Morrell; by request of Governor Locke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/27/05, 3/1/05 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates a pilot program for College in the High School.
- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt rules for the pilot program and to report back to the Legislature in December 2009.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Kenney, Chair; Sells, Vice Chair; Cox, Ranking Minority Member; Rodne, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buri, Fromhold, Hasegawa, Jarrett, Ormsby, Priest, Roberts and Sommers.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Dunn.

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

A variety of dual enrollment programs allow high school students to earn post-secondary course credit while also earning credit toward high school graduation. Examples of dual credit programs include Running Start, College in the High School (CHS), Tech Prep, and International Baccalaureate. Students who participate in these dual enrollment programs have the opportunity to graduate from high school with all or a portion of their intended college course work already completed.

The Running Start program provides students the opportunity to earn dual credit for classes offered on the campus of a two or four-year institution of higher education. Program rules provide for a distribution of funds from the student's school district to the institution of higher education to cover the cost of the student's participation. A comparable funding mechanism does not exist for programs in which students earn credit for college classes offered at their high school campus.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The CHS pilot program allows for the selection of up to six school district sites at which college courses will be offered for three consecutive school years through a partnership agreement between the school district and a public institution of higher education. Under the CHS pilot program, public two- and four-year colleges may charge a fee of up to \$280 per student for a five-credit college course. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must allocate to school districts \$140 per pupil per five-credit CHS course, and \$280 per pupil for those students eligible for free and reduced priced meals. School districts must transfer the amount to the appropriate college or university.

The OSPI, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Higher Education Coordinating Board are directed to adopt rules for the CHS pilot program. At least four of the sites must be in rural school districts where students have limited or no access to Running Start courses. The rules must give a preference to sites where math courses will be offered and must encourage maximum use of the CHS program at pilot sites.

Students in grades 11 and 12 who have met the state standard on the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) may participate. Program admission standards may be established by school districts and their partnering institutions. Participating districts must provide information about the CHS pilot program to students in grades 10, 11, and 12 and their families.

School districts must offer high school credit for completion of CHS courses. The number of credits will be determined by examining comparable courses. If no comparable course is offered at the high school, the school building administrator must determine the number of credits prior to the student enrolling in a course. High school transcripts must reflect successfully completed courses.

The OSPI must develop counseling guidelines to ensure students and parents understand the credits earned in high school dual credit programs count toward the total number of credits for financial aid purposes. Information about the CHS pilot program must be included in the OSPI's annual distribution of information about enrollment options for high school students. Schools also must include the CHS pilot program in the information provided to students regarding optional educational pathways.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The original bill created a statewide CHS program and established a funding structure for all college courses offered at a high school campus. The substitute bill limits the program to six pilot sites, a majority of which must be in rural districts where students have little or no access to Running Start courses. The substitute also requires reporting back to the Legislature, including a recommendation regarding whether the CHS pilot program should be continued or expanded.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 2, 2005.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: (In support of original bill) Some school districts and colleges already are doing this. In most cases students have to pay, or the school district must gather additional moneys and pay for the course. Allowing more students access to college courses without the costs of tuition will benefit many students. This is an opportunity for students to have more access to college courses, both in terms of costs, and for those students who aren't ready to leave their high school campus. The potential for this program at rural school districts is enormous, especially for those students who pass the high school WASL and are ready for more challenging course work. This bill would allow students to take college courses without disrupting their high school schedule to travel to the college to take the courses. It adds the rigor and relevance that are so important to the junior and senior years of high school. The CHS program brings teachers together across the K-12 and higher education sectors and helps better align the expectations for students. The Running Start program does not do that. The independent colleges also would like to participate in the CHS pilot program.

(With concerns on original bill) This is another example of the excellent camaraderie of the dual enrollment work group. There are some agreements of the work group that are not in this proposal. This includes the high school paying for the instructors who will teach the college courses and providing the facility for the course on the high school campus. We suggest including additional aspects of the work group's report to Governor Locke and making it clear there would be no additional cost to the students. We also suggest that instead of placing the \$280 tuition cost in statute, you include the calculation used to arrive at the cost in the statute. This would allow the tuition cost to change as the factors used to derive that cost also change. We do not support a fixed tuition amount but we support the model for the calculation.

(Neutral) This bill is a result of the dual enrollment work group comprised of representatives from the K-12 and higher education communities. Many students are unable to participate in Running Start due to geographical barriers and other students choose not to participate because they don't want to leave their high school campus. The bill remedies this problem by offering the college courses on the high school campus.

Although some opportunities exist currently for students to take college courses at their high school, there is no established funding mechanism for these courses as compared to the Running Start courses. The costs of college courses offered at the high school campus range anywhere between \$200 to \$300 per five-credit class. This creates a barrier for some students and the bill would remedy this by creating an established funding mechanism to pay for half or all of the student's cost.

Because the Governor is calling for a comprehensive study of K-12 and higher education finance, she is reluctant to see piecemeal changes to the system and will not be actively working this bill.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support of original bill) Kyra Kester, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction; Rainer Houser, Association of Washington School Principals; Greg Scheiderer, Independent Colleges of Washington; Bjorn Danielson, Antioch University-Seattle; Linda Beath, Central Washington University; and Jim Kowalkowski, Pomeroy School District.

(With concerns on original bill) Jean Hernandez, Cascadia Community College; Tim Washburn, University of Washington; and Barbara Mertens, Washington Association of School Administrators.

(Neutral) Debora Merle, Office of the Governor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.